School and college students

You get occasional opportunities to meet a researcher

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Teachers and college lecturers

You occasionally work with a researcher (or member of the university outreach team) to provide students with a one off enrichment activity

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Teachers and college lecturers

Why do it?
To energise and interest students and offer them a chance to experience research.

Who is involved?
Just you and the researcher.

What does it cost?
Time to liaise with the researcher and out of pocket expenses (less than £50).

What's its value?
Usually no formal evaluation mechanisms are in place so value is hard to evidence, but students can be very engaged with the activity.

Any downsides?
Limited opportunities to shape the content and no quality assurance so the interaction might not always be very good. The input isn't sustained – it tends to be a one off.

School and college students

What's good about it?
I enjoy meeting researchers and finding out more about what they do every day. Some are really enthusiastic, so it makes the lesson more interesting. Sometimes it can be a bit boring though, and I can't see how it's relevant to me.

How involved do I feel?
We are sometimes asked questions about what's happening, and there can be interesting activities too. We can ask questions and the researcher can't always answer them! Sometimes our teacher asks us what we think of the session at the end.

Any downsides?
Some of the researchers are really interesting, but some aren't and it can feel a bit like a waste of time. I don't always understand what they are talking about, and sometimes the activities are a bit dull. I prefer it when I can get properly involved, rather than it just being a talk.

Partnership broker

There is currently no one specifically focussed on brokering school-university partnerships at your institution, but you are keen to support researchers in your department to engage with schools

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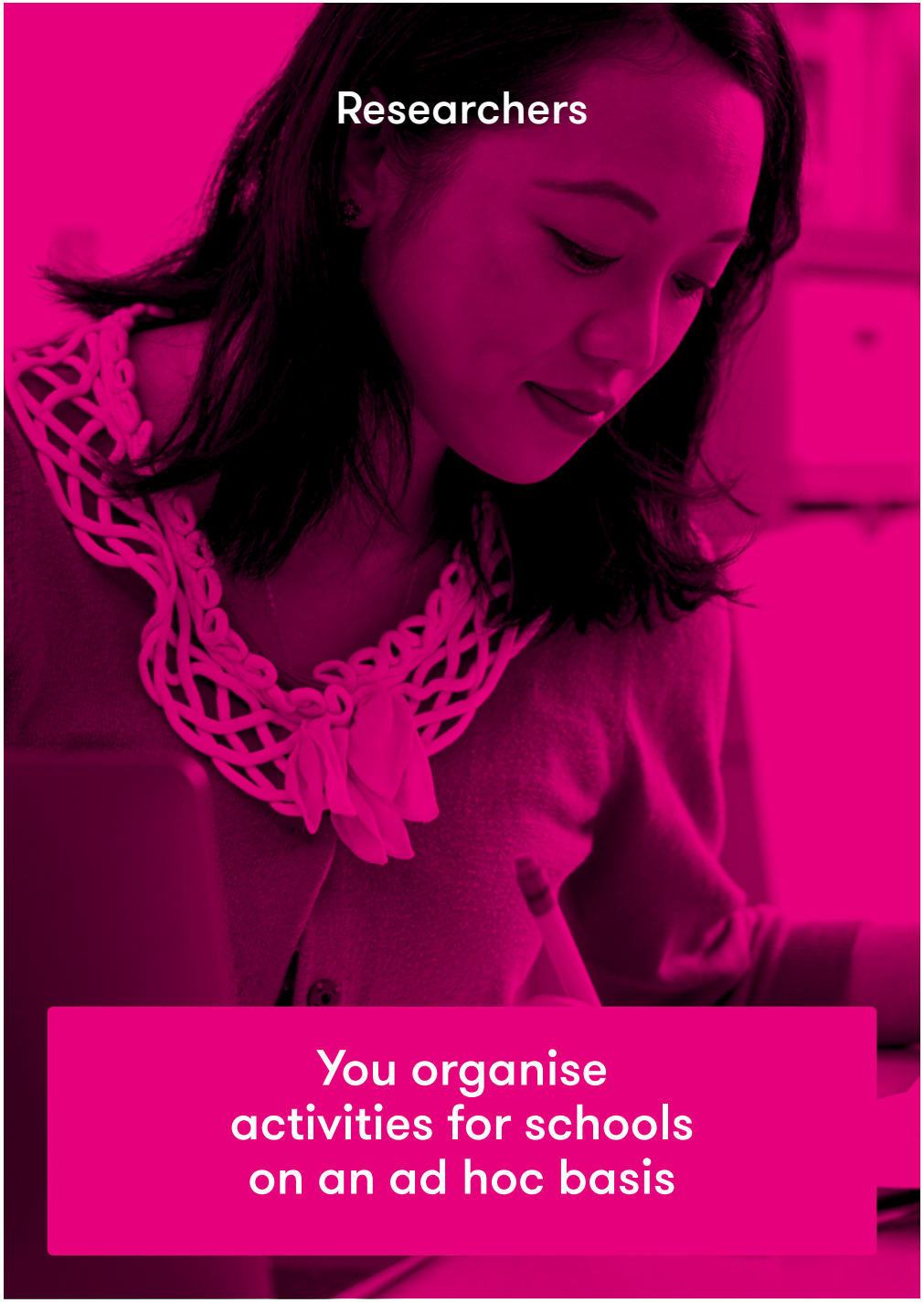

Researchers

You organise activities for schools on an ad hoc basis

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Researchers

Why do it?
You are passionate about engaging young people with research and want to inspire them to learn. Great 'feel good' factor!

Who is involved?
You and a teacher, with little or no support from the university.

What does it cost?
Time to prepare and to organise the visit. Cost of any materials you develop for use in the session.

What's its value?
It can be really inspiring for students and teachers, and can help you develop new skills and experiences (linked to the Researcher Development Framework). However, with no evaluation plan in place, the value is hard to evidence.

Any downsides?
It can be difficult to know how to get started if you have little knowledge of the curriculum or how to engage students. You can feel unsupported, the quality of the interaction may be poor, and the benefits may not be fully realised.

Partnership broker

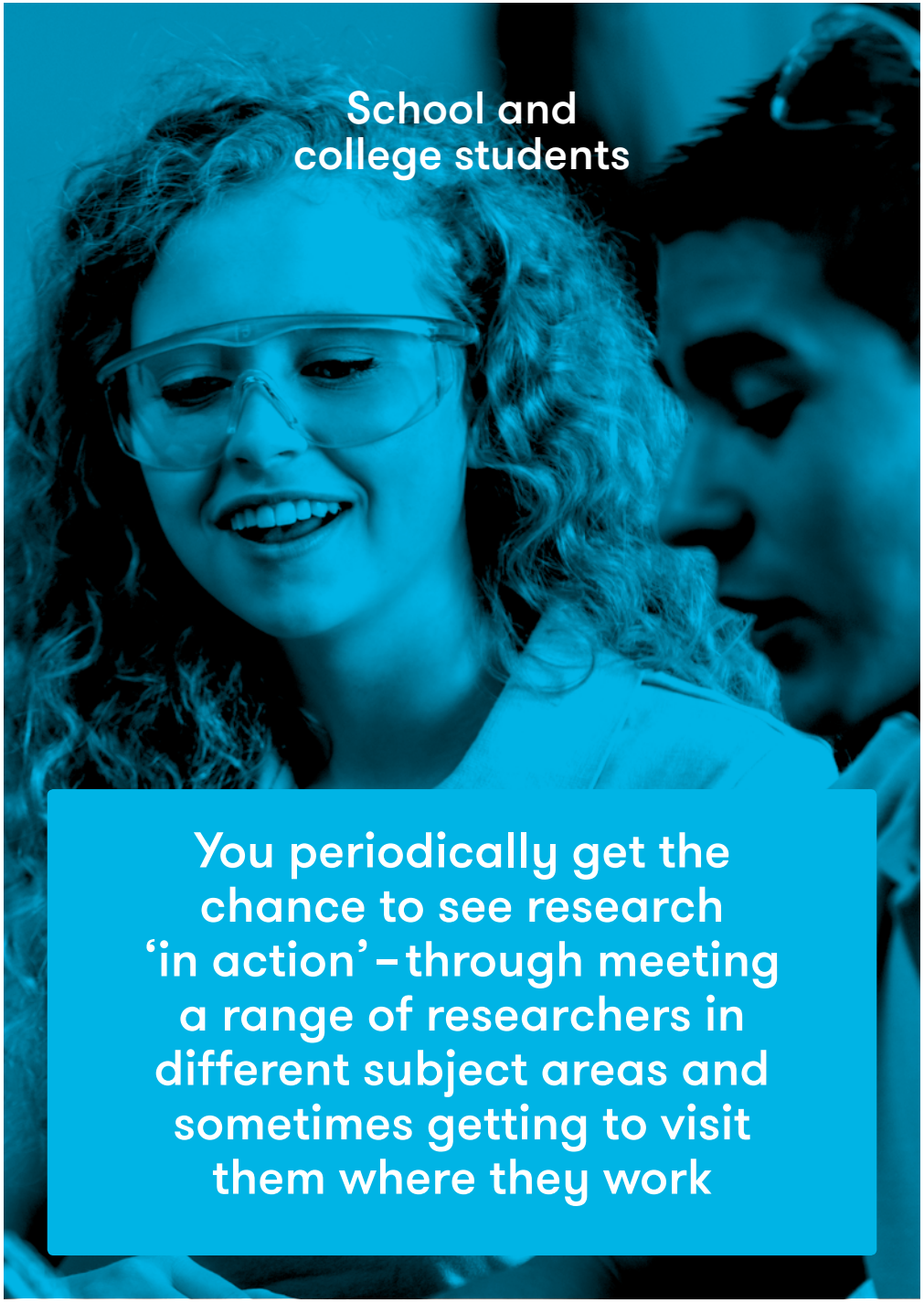
Why do it?
You are passionate about engaging young people with research and want to help make it happen.

Who is involved?
You may encourage researchers wanting to get involved to contact local schools, or link them to the Widening Participation team.

What does it cost?
Time to engage with researchers.

What's its value?
You can see it can be really inspiring for school students and teachers. However, with no evaluation plan in place the value is hard to evidence.

Any downsides?
You are enthusiastic about encouraging people to get involved, but have little resource to support researchers to develop appropriate activity – therefore, you are concerned that the quality of interactions can be poor.



School and college students

You periodically get the chance to see research 'in action' – through meeting a range of researchers in different subject areas and sometimes getting to visit them where they work

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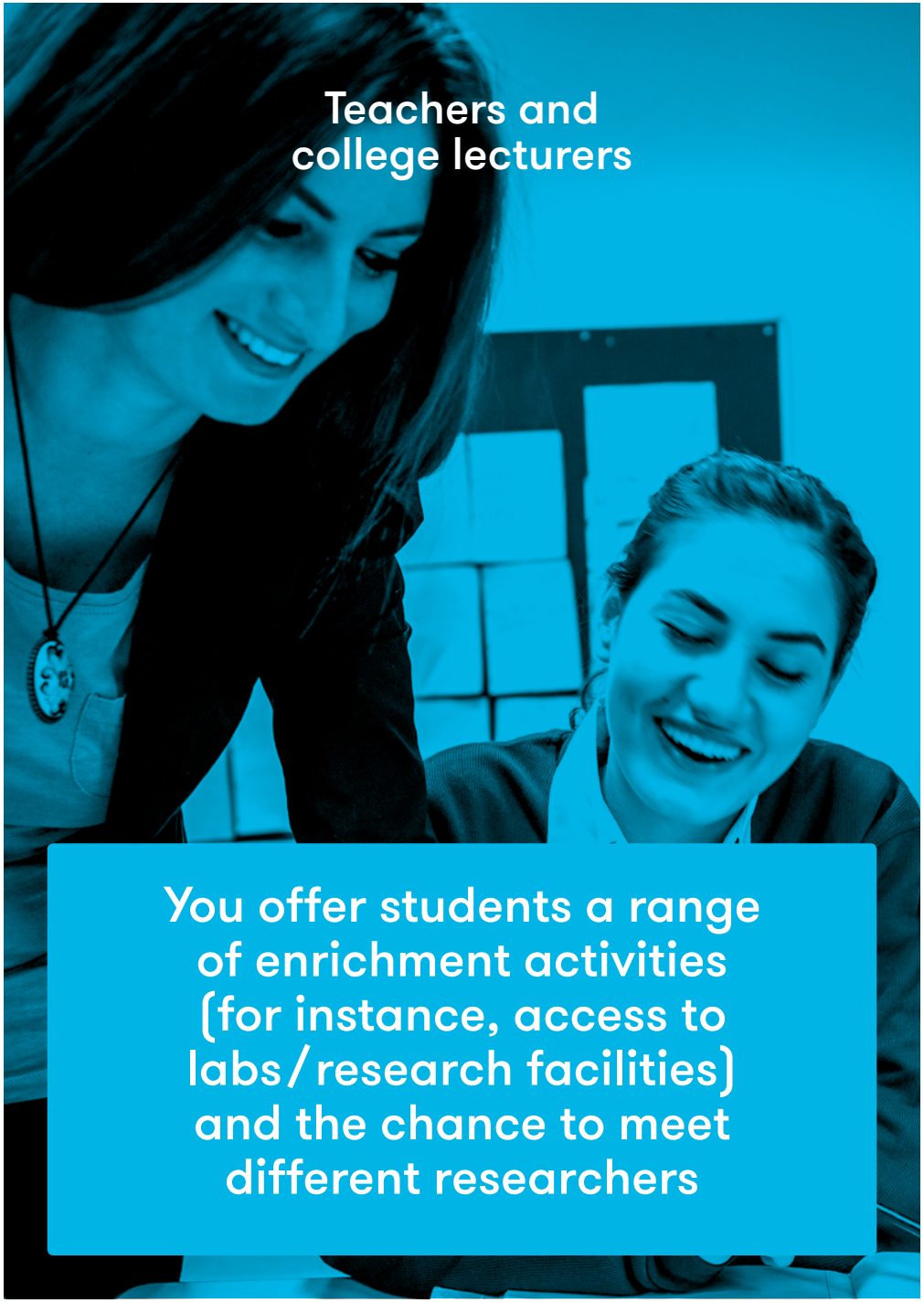

Teachers and college lecturers

You offer students a range of enrichment activities (for instance, access to labs / research facilities) and the chance to meet different researchers

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Teachers and college lecturers

Why do it?
To motivate students and deepen their learning; to enrich your own subject knowledge.

Who is involved?
You, several researchers, and a contact point at the university/universities to help arrange the experiences.

What does it cost?
Some of your time to liaise and plan; the university may be able to subsidise the cost of any trips out of school/college. Trips cost less than £500.

What's its value?
There may be some evaluation in place to help secure feedback from you and your students to evidence its value and inform future work – but this is patchy.

Any downsides?
The programme can be a bit ad hoc and doesn't always integrate well with the curriculum. Activities offered are decided by the university, with limited input from you.

School and college students

What's good about it?
I sometimes feel that the work we do at school isn't that useful. Now I can see how some of what we do can be put to really interesting uses to find out new things or tackle big problems such as health issues or poverty. It's interesting to think that some of the researchers we meet used to be just like me.

How involved do I feel?
I really enjoy going to a university to see some of the facilities, like the labs or the archives they work with. Some of the school sessions have been useful in thinking about what I do next.

Any downsides?
It can all feel a bit unrelated to what we do at school. Some of things we do are a bit boring and why is it mainly labs we go to visit? Whilst some of my friends are interested in science, I am more interested in arts subjects.

Partnership broker

You work to develop activities for your researchers to get involved in; to this end, you facilitate relationships with local schools, and recruit and support researchers to work with them

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Researchers

You participate in one off or short term activities, including occasional school visits to the university

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Researchers

Why do it?
To inspire students and encourage them to develop new skills and realise their potential. To enhance your own skills.

Who is involved?
A teacher, a small team of researchers, and a member of staff at the university to organise and support the activities.

What does it cost?
You need to attend briefings, develop your resources, and participate in sessions with schools. Material costs are borne by the university.

What's its value?
Working in a supported way enables you to develop your skills and ensure that the activities you develop are relevant and work well. Students benefit from engaging with a broader range of researchers, and being inspired by their work. Evaluation helps demonstrate the value to the students.

Any downsides?
Requires a significant commitment to both developing and delivering the session. Evaluation may uncover things about your approach that need to be improved.

Partnership broker

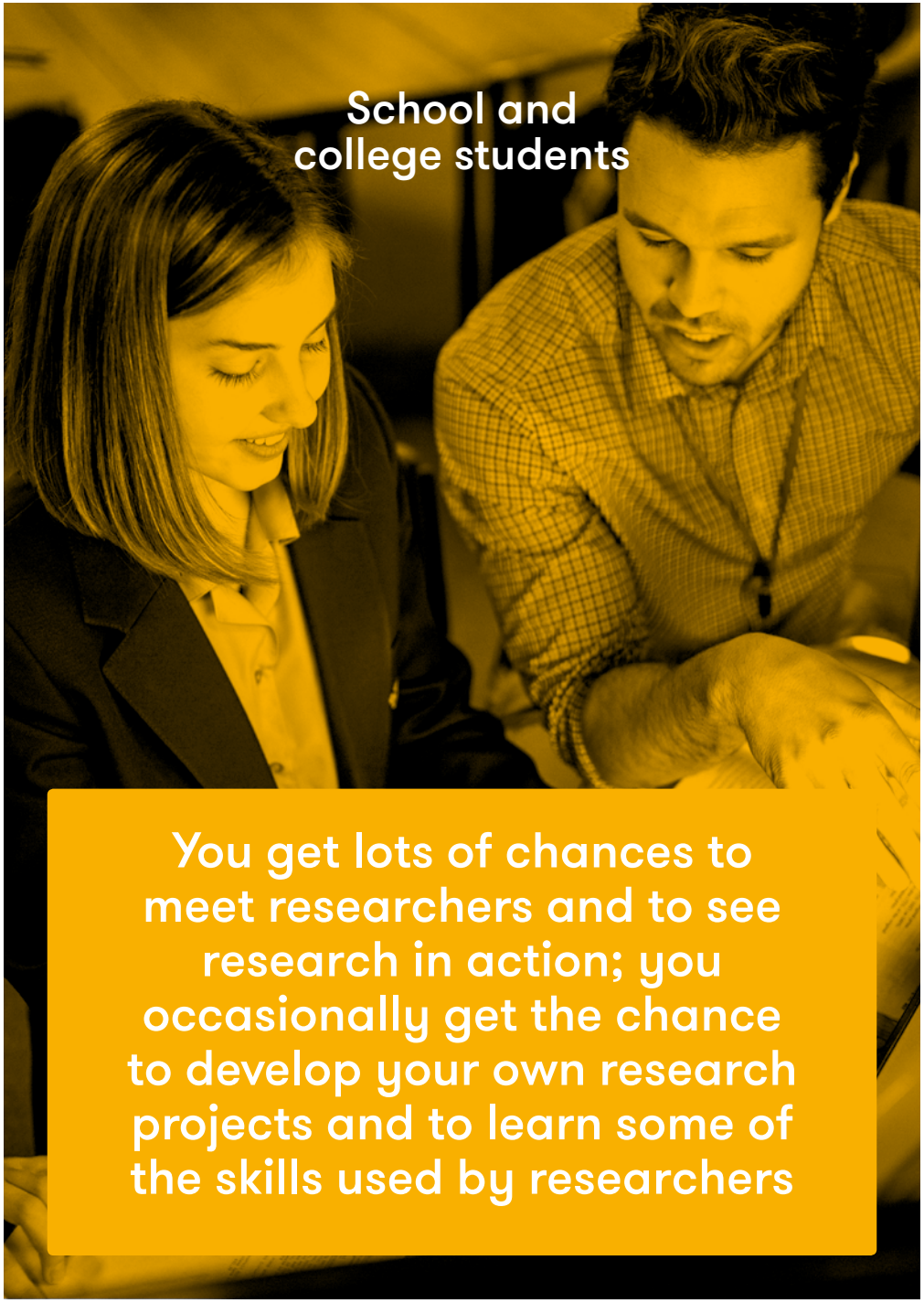
Why do it?
To inspire researchers and students and encourage them to develop new skills and realise their potential. To ensure that the work you do has impact.

Who is involved?
You work with a teacher and a small team of researchers to organise and support the activities. You may draw on the expertise and support of other parts of the university, which specialise in working with schools.

What does it cost?
You have a small dedicated budget to support this work (less than £1K), drawing on researcher development funding.

What's its value?
Your researchers develop key skills and the activities they develop are relevant and work well. You are able to manage the work efficiently. Evaluation helps demonstrate the value to the students and researchers.

Any downsides?
Recruiting and training researchers can take more time than you expect; you may raise expectations in schools that can't be fulfilled. Your department may not value the work you do.



School and college students

You get lots of chances to meet researchers and to see research in action; you occasionally get the chance to develop your own research projects and to learn some of the skills used by researchers

Teachers and college lecturers

You integrate research into your teaching (perhaps including students' own research projects) and enhance your own subject knowledge through CPD exploring the latest research

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Teachers and college lecturers

Why do it?
You're convinced this makes a genuine difference to students' learning and really value the chance to deepen your own subject knowledge.

Who is involved?
There are a range of resources and networks in place for you to draw on; easily accessed contact points in the university and a coordinator in your own institution.

What does it cost?
You invest significant time to plan and manage the activities; you can draw on a small budget (less than £1K) to make things happen; much of the offer is subsidised or free to access.

What's its value?
There is a university evaluation framework in place to help assess the value and impact of the activity – you use this to inform your plans.

Any downsides?
Your institution may not recognise the value of the work – e.g. in allocating time or recognising it in appraisal.

School and college students

What's good about it?
I find the contact we have with researchers / our visits to the university a real highlight. Having a chance to do a one off research project was great. It made me realise that if they can do it, so can I!

How involved do I feel?
I loved being given the chance to develop my own research project – it was hard work, but I really enjoyed working out a topic and method and then collecting the data and analysing it. It felt different to what we usually do and I liked the researcher who helped me.

Any downsides?
Sometimes the topics we explore with the researchers are really hard to grasp and I can't always see their relevance to me. I wish I'd been given the chance to do more of my own research.

Partnership broker

You have developed an effective approach to support researchers to engage with schools, which draws on a broad base of trained researchers. Schools are able to participate in a range of activities in ways relevant and possible for them

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Researchers

You participate in a range of different types of activities, with lots of support to match your interests to the schools'; your department values and recognises your contribution

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Researchers

Why do it?
You believe in the value of working with young people in school/college and want to get more involved – and your department supports you to do so.

Who is involved?
A university broker helps ensure the work is really well managed and is relevant for the teachers and students.

What does it cost?
A significant time commitment is needed to help create the resources and to run activities as well as review and improve upon them.

What's its value?
Skills development and refreshed enthusiasm for your research area. Effective evaluation (informed by teachers and researchers) demonstrates how everyone is benefiting as well as informing future activity.

Any downsides?
It can be hard to fit this in alongside all your other commitments.

Partnership broker

Why do it?
By developing a suite of approaches you can engage a wide group of schools in ways meaningful to them and involve researchers with different aptitudes for engagement, giving lots of opportunities to try things out in a supported way. Ultimately activities support school students' learning.

Who is involved?
You ensure the work is well managed and relevant for the teachers, students and researchers. You work with lead teachers and researchers to develop new activities.

What does it cost?
Significant time and resource is needed to develop the partnership. You offer funding to schools to participate in open days, and CPD events for teachers.

What's its value?
Effective evaluation (informed by teachers and researchers) demonstrates how everyone is benefiting as well as informing future activity. The long term nature of the partnership benefits those involved, but also opens the door for more schools and researchers to get involved.

Any downsides?
Dependency on university to continue supporting this activity and providing it with long term resource.

School and college students

Doing your own research and meeting researchers is integral to many of your subjects; your teachers are really enthusiastic and interested in research and regularly talk about it – it really brings your learning to life

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Teachers and college lecturers

You champion the value of engaging with research/researchers with your colleagues and lead by example; you have support from your own institution and you collaborate with university colleagues to deliver a long term programme of activity

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Teachers and college lecturers

Why do it?
This is core to your professional work: you want to help others experience the benefits of working in this way.

Who is involved?
You have an extensive network of contacts in other schools and universities and a robust partnership in place with clear roles and responsibilities.

What does it cost?
You have time allocated in your workload and some admin support; budget is allocated to facilitate arrangements.

What's its value?
You have a robust evaluation framework in place to capture evidence of the benefits to all who are involved.

Any downsides?
Working in this way requires long term commitment and resource from all partners – changes to personnel or budget cuts can have a major impact.

School and college students

What's good about it?
The subjects I am studying now make more sense to me. I can see how they provide brilliant ways of making sense of the world and how it works. I've been inspired by the curiosity and the skills of the researchers I've met.

How involved do I feel?
Getting to know some individual researchers has been great – seeing them a few times, and visiting them where they work has made a big difference. I've enjoyed learning how to do research and getting really helpful feedback on my work. I feel a lot more confident now, and motivated to ask questions!

Any downsides?
I have found the research projects I did really interesting, but they took a lot of time. Sometimes the researcher who supported the project wasn't available and they didn't always know the answers to the questions I had.

Partnership broker

You provide a wide range of supported opportunities for researchers, including participating in pre-arranged activities and co-researching with students; you offer significant support and create opportunities to share learning and develop practice across the institution. You have a number of strong school partners, who inform the work, and encourage others to get involved

CUT

Researchers

You get involved in a wide range of supported opportunities for researchers including participating in pre-arranged activities and co-researching with students; your university provides significant support and opportunities to share learning and develop practice

CUT

Researchers

Why do it?
Supporting young people to get involved in research is fundamentally important to you – you want to make a sustained commitment and do it really well. You are keen to develop your own skills in this area.

Who is involved?
A dedicated team at the university; lead teachers from a number of schools; other researchers.

What does it cost?
You choose what you participate in and how – from one off activities, to mentoring students, to CPD. Time commitment is significant, but all other costs are covered.

What's its value?
Evaluation provides a robust evidence base as to the value to all involved, including the future direction of students involved in the programme. You feel part of something.

Any downsides?
The significant commitment needed for longer term relationships – you feel bad when you can't give as much time as you want to.

Partnership broker

Why do it?
This is an efficient way to develop high quality provision that brings cutting edge research into the classroom and delivers long term impact and value for everyone concerned.

Who is involved?
You are part of a dedicated team at the university, working with lead teachers from a number of schools and researchers. The activities are informed by evaluation, as well as teacher, student and researcher input.

What does it cost?
The university has a relevant budget set aside to support really effective engagement with schools (e.g. £10K). There is significant staff time dedicated to making the partnerships thrive.

What's its value?
Evaluation provides robust evidence as to the value to all involved, including the future direction of students involved in the programme; teacher skills development; the enhanced skills of researchers; and, where relevant, research impact.

Any downsides?
Turnover of staff in key schools can make the programme vulnerable; university funding rounds can mean that the programme is exposed when cuts are made; it can be difficult to link across to all other parts of the university managing schools' engagement; researchers may not be able to commit long term to the programme.